

REMARKS

This amendment is submitted in response to the Examiner's Action dated March 3, 2004. Applicants have amended the claims to clarify key features of the invention, overcome the claim objections and rejections, and place the claims in condition for allowance. Several additional claims reciting allowable subject matter have been added to the existing claim sets. The second Claim 13 has been canceled and represented as new claim 20. No new matter has been added, and the amendments place the claims in better condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request entry of the amendments to the claims. The discussion/arguments provided below reference the claims in their amended form.

DRAWING OBJECTIONS

In the present Office Action, the drawings are objected to for being informal. Also, Examiners states that Figures 1 and 2 should be designated as "Prior Art." Accordingly, Applicants have added the label "Prior Art" to both Figures 1 and 2. Applicants further submit herewith formal drawings correcting all of the stated informalities in the previously submitted drawings. Submission of formal drawings overcomes the drawing objections, which objections Applicants now respectfully request be removed.

CLAIMS OBJECTIONS

In the present Office Action, Claim 5 is objected to because of typographical errors. Accordingly, Applicants have amended Claim 5 to remove these errors and overcome the claim objections.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

In the present Office Action, Examiner states that the features recited by Claims 2, 3 and 8-10 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants have incorporated several key distinguishing features of these conditionally allowed claims into their respective independent claims. Applicants omitted from the independent claims certain elements of the dependent claims thought to be unnecessarily restrictive. Allowable dependent claim features were also incorporated into the independent Claim 13.

The incorporation of allowable subject matter in the independent claims places the independent claims and all claims dependent thereon in condition for allowance. Applicants, therefore, respectfully request Examiner remove the conditions place on the allowability of the claims and extend the allowance to cover all pending claims.

CLAIMS REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102 AND

In the present Office Action, Claims 1, 5, 6, 11 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by *Yamashita, et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,124,736).

In the present Office Action, Claims 4, 7 and 13-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Yamashita, et al.* in view of *El Ayat, et a .* (U.S. Patent No. 5,698,992).

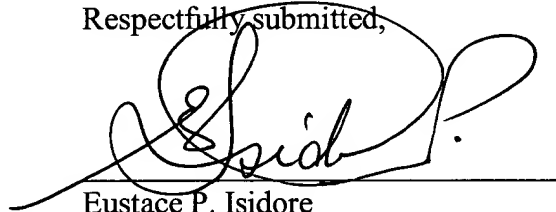
As noted in the section above, Applicants' independent claims now recite allowable subject matter taken from conditionally allowed claims. The amendments to the claims thus overcome the present 102 and 103 rejections and places the above claims in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

Applicants have diligently responded to the Office Action by amending the claims to overcome objections and by incorporating allowable subject matter into the independent claims. The incorporation of allowable subject matter into the claims overcomes the §102 and §103 rejections, and Applicants, therefore, respectfully request reconsideration of the rejections and issuance of a Notice of Allowance for all claims now pending.

Applicants further respectfully request the Examiner contact the undersigned attorney of record at 512.343.6116 if such would further or expedite the prosecution of the present Application.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'E. Isidore', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized with loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Eustace P. Isidore

Registered with Limited Recognition (see attached)

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